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SITUATION AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES: UNICEF PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES IN 1992

SUMMARY

In response to Executive Board decisions 1990/5 (E/ICEF/1990/13), 1991/20 (E/ICEF/1991/15) and 1992/19 (E/ICEF/1992/14), the present paper reports on UNICEF activities in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States. Chapter I outlines the UNICEF mandate and framework for action. Political, economic and social developments in the region, including the needs of women and children, are reported in chapter II. Chapter III details collaboration with agencies of the United Nations system. In chapter IV, the activities relating to advocacy, policy, development, planning for children, country programme preparations and emergency responses, which have been undertaken by UNICEF in partnership with others, are discussed. Chapter V briefly highlights some of the lessons learned and points to challenges faced by UNICEF during the coming years.

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I. THE UNICEF MANDATE AND FRAMEWORK OF ACTION

1. In the wake of the momentous changes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, the UNICEF secretariat presented an information note to the 1990 Executive Board concerning the situation of children in the region (E/ICEF/1990/CRP.4). The Board approved an initial commitment of funds to assess the issues involved and to examine the organization's potential, though limited, involvement (E/ICEF/1990/13, decision 1990/5).

2. One year later, in April 1991, the Executive Board discussed the plight of children in Central and Eastern Europe and expressed serious concern about the severe consequences for children of the rapid political, social and economic transformations taking place in these countries. As a result, the Board allocated $1 million and requested UNICEF to undertake a programme of activities on behalf of children (E/ICEF/1991/15, decision 1991/20), including support for:

(a) The development of child-focused policies in the context of the move to market economies;

(b) The policies and development of low-cost services for health, nutrition, water supply, sanitation and basic education, which draw on UNICEF experience in other parts of the world;

(c) The preparation of situation analyses and national programmes of action (NPAs).

3. Concern for children in the region was intensified in December 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The rapid economic and social disintegration which followed in the new independent States put an estimated 90 million children at risk of deteriorating health conditions. In February 1992, UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), with the participation of the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Development Programme, led missions to 14 of the former republics. The missions reported a "looming human crisis" bearing particularly heavily on women and children throughout the area.

4. At its 1992 session, the Executive Board authorized UNICEF to continue its programme of support for advocacy, analytical studies for policy development and emergency assistance to countries in Central and Eastern Europe and to extend this support to the new independent States (E/ICEF/1992/14, decision 1992/19). The Board emphasized that all activities should be carried out in close collaboration with relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations and other organizations.

5. In response to growing needs and in recognition of the increasing number of countries in the region (from 7 to 26), the Executive Board earmarked an additional $1 million for 1992, and $2 million per year for 1993 and 1994. In addition, the Board approved the development of programmes of assistance to be financed from general resources and through supplementary funding in countries meeting UNICEF criteria for regular programme support. These were: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

6. Following the Board decision, UNICEF fielded assessment and programme development missions to these "qualifying" countries to assist Governments in the preparation of country programmes of cooperation. Two-year "bridging" programmes of assistance for children and women were prepared in late 1992 and are being presented to the 1993 Executive Board. The bridging period will allow the preparation of regular five-year programmes to be submitted to the Board in 1995. A recommendation for continued cooperation financed from supplementary funds is also being presented for Romania, where a programme of emergency activities has been under way since 1991.

7. The 1992 Board also adopted a separate decision on victims of the Chernobyl disaster (E/ICEF/1992/14, decision 1992/20), requesting UNICEF to continue to provide, in coordination with other United Nations agencies, appropriate support to children and mothers who are victims of that disaster.

II. POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION

8. The transition to market-oriented economies taking place in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States is unprecedented in both scope and impact. The transition has been marked by rapid, unpredictable and often violent and chaotic social transformation. Resurgent nationalism, separatism, minority conflicts, border disputes and mass migration have all occurred in various countries. Such events and movements are compounded by the devastating environmental degradation in the region.

9. UNICEF involvement in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States has come about at a time when accepted ways of thinking and patterns of authority and responsibility are being challenged. Old systems of social welfare and the provision of services for women and children are threatened not only by economic decline, but also by the new value systems and priorities emerging as societies adapt to new economic and political realities. Under pressure to bring about far-reaching social and political changes in their countries, Governments, politicians and decision makers too often neglect the interests and needs of the vulnerable groups in their societies.

A. Central and Eastern Europe

10. In Central and Eastern Europe, economic reform has proven to be slower, more difficult and costlier than expected. Furthermore, recession and sharp declines in production have affected virtually all countries in the region. The sharp contraction in output initiated in these countries continued at a slightly slower pace in 1992, the year for which an overall decline of almost 10 per cent in gross domestic product was recorded.

11. The considerable drop in real wages, pensions and social benefits (including cash transfers to children), the rise in the cost of living and the steady increase in unemployment have already caused, and continue to cause, a massive increase in poverty and growing social tension. Such tension may lead to gradual or abrupt abandonment of the "shock therapy" programmes launched in 1990 and 1991. Of particular gravity is the spread of unemployment, which has well surpassed the 10 per cent mark in Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland,

and is rapidly reaching that level in other countries of the region. This is expected to double in some countries over the next two years with further closure of inefficient enterprises.

12. In view of the unexpected magnitude and duration of this transition, the future is uncertain and there is considerable question about when the standard of living of large sections of the population will improve on a sustained basis. While the rate of inflation and domestic macroeconomic imbalances have started to stabilize in some of the countries with early reform (Hungary and Poland), the overall economic outlook for 1993 and beyond remains severely clouded by the continued economic stagnation in the countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, by the economic chaos in the former Soviet Union and by serious internal turmoil in several countries of former Yugoslavia.

B. The new independent States

13. During the past year, the 15 republics of the former Soviet Union, with a population of over 300 million, have engaged in major efforts to develop new political structures and to effect far-reaching economic reforms. Their performance in stabilizing their economies and in implementing structural and sectoral reforms has varied widely. In general, the costs of the transition, thus far, remain very high.

14. The fall in economic activity in the region is without precedent in industrialized countries. The republics of the former Soviet Union experienced a decline of about 15 per cent in output in 1992, following a contraction of 17 per cent in 1991 that affected almost all industrial and agricultural sectors, including the production of meat, milk and other dietary staples.

15. In many of the new independent States, the sharp decline in output in 1992 and 1993 was associated with the collapse of trade and payment systems arranged by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the breakup of traditional ties within the economy of the former Soviet Union. Natural disasters and civil strife also contributed to the substantial drop in output, most notably in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Tajikistan.

16. For the majority of these countries the situation has also been aggravated by a deterioration in the terms of trade associated with the shift to world market prices, especially for imported energy. Chronic shortages of foreign currency reserves have considerably reduced investments in industrial and social sectors, as well as the capacity of Governments to purchase food, medical equipment, pharmaceuticals and consumer goods. Between January and July 1992, total exports from the former republics fell by 35 per cent and imports fell by 22 per cent.

17. With rapidly rising inflation, real family incomes have fallen considerably in all of the republics, and continue to fall. By August 1992, the aggregated retail price index on consumer goods and services in the new independent States rose roughly 10 times as compared with August 1991. Costs of preschool education increased 10 times in Kyrgyzstan and 18 times in Moldova.

18. In November 1992, the statistics office of the new independent States revealed that many Russians are on the "brink of physical survival", with one third of Russia's 149 million persons earning less than a minimum consumer budget of 2,000 roubles per month. A poll conducted in Moscow in July 1992 showed that at least 38 per cent of inhabitants, especially the most vulnerable, have been forced to reduce their daily food consumption considerably. At the same time, severe budget constraints are now forcing Governments to eliminate remaining subsidies on bread, milk and other basic daily goods. Rapidly increasing prices, contraction of local production, reduction of imports and fear of inflation by the population have caused chronic shortages of basic consumer items in many regions.

19. The growing economic crisis is causing especially severe hardship for the most vulnerable populations of these countries - children, women and the elderly. Children are facing another winter without adequate safety nets.

III. COLLABORATION WITH AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

20. As will be described more fully in chapter IV, most UNICEF-assisted activities are being or have been carried out in partnership with other agencies of the United Nations system and with international, bilateral and non-governmental organizations. This principle of partnership reflects both the United Nations new emphasis on a coordinated strategy and the recognition that even with its limited resources, UNICEF can facilitate and enhance the effectiveness of national and international partners.

21. In qualifying countries where UNICEF programmes of assistance are being developed, they will, as noted in the country programme recommendations, be undertaken within the framework of an integrated United Nations systems approach and presence. In non-qualifying countries, UNICEF will seek to work within this framework to facilitate information exchange and promote advocacy activities. Close coordination will be maintained with the Secretary-General's representative and other United Nations agencies, while maintaining clear lines of responsibility and accountability. Emergency responses are implemented within the framework of consolidated appeals and consolidated plans of action.

22. UNICEF is collaborating with WHO on a number of activities, including technical meetings and workshops, and on the development of a clearing-house for medical assistance. A joint UNICEF/WHO consultation with the Ministers of Health in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan was held in December 1992 to review the immediate and medium-term health care needs of these countries.

23. At the Tokyo Coordinating Conference on Humanitarian Assistance to the new independent States, held in October 1992 and hosted by the Government of Japan (a follow-up to the Washington and Lisbon coordinating meetings), UNICEF participated as a member of the United Nations unified delegation led by the Director-General of WHO. The five working groups on energy, food, medicine, shelter and technical assistance, which were established at the Washington conference in January 1992, presented their reports and concluded that new follow-up mechanisms should be established through consultative group meetings led by the World Bank.

24. UNICEF has participated in joint missions which have resulted in inter-agency appeals through the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and the former Yugoslavia. Contacts with United Nations staff in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Uzbekistan have been initiated and will be closely pursued at the country level. In Albania and Romania, UNICEF-supported emergency activities are being carried out in close collaboration with other United Nations agencies.

25. In Istanbul, in November 1992, the Government of Turkey, in collaboration with WHO, held the First Health Congress of Turkish Republics. Representatives from UNICEF and the Governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan reviewed health problems and their potential solutions.

26. Collaboration with the World Bank programmes in the new independent States has been initiated though a number of workshops and discussions. In Romania, the UNICEF representative is working closely with the World Bank to facilitate the procurement of Bank-financed pharmaceuticals through the UNICEF Supply Division warehouse at Copenhagen.

IV. ACTIVITIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES: UNICEF IN PARTNERSHIP

A. Advocacy, policy development and planning for children

27. Based on its role in supporting the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on commitments made by Governments in the wake of the World Summit for Children, UNICEF has an exceptional opportunity to influence decisions on social policy and legislation now being made in the region. The UNICEF contribution to these debates can help to ensure continuing attention and priority for the needs of women and children in the coming years.

28. As of the end of 1992, the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been ratified by 15 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States - Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, the former Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Ukraine and the former Yugoslavia; 11 countries in the region have also signed the Declaration of the World Summit for Children. Efforts to ensure endorsement of both the Convention and the Declaration by the remaining countries of the region are a priority in 1993.

29. Where National Committees for UNICEF exist, they are uniquely placed to support efforts to implement the Convention. Therefore, the Executive Board, at its 1992 session, encouraged the development of new or revitalized National Committees in the region. In September 1992, UNICEF established contact with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government officials in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with a view to creating National Committees for UNICEF in those countries. Plans are under way to initiate discussions with relevant groups in a number of other former republics. During 1992, the Romanian Committee for UNICEF, supported by funds and technical assistance provided by the Romania country programme, carried out a series of "Days of the Rights of

the Child" in 14 major Romanian cities in order to promote public awareness and knowledge of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Bulgarian National Committee for UNICEF funded the production of a documentary on the rights of Bulgarian children which illustrates the realities of childhood after the fall of communism in the region. The Czech and Slovak Committee for UNICEF organized a round-table conference of 60 leading health professionals that established a "baby-friendly" hospital initiative committee and identified candidate hospitals that could soon meet the criteria for being accredited as "baby-friendly".

30. A meeting of National Committees of Central and Eastern European countries held in December 1992 in Velingrad, Bulgaria, provided an opportunity to review activities of committees in the region and to stimulate further action, particularly as regards the preparation of situation analyses of children and women in countries in the region and formulation of NPAs.

31. NGOs have assumed a critical role as major partners in collaborative activities, particularly in countries where UNICEF had no permanent presence. They have been successful in implementing a three-pronged strategy: (a) facilitating exchange of information and experience among the many partners active in the region; (b) supporting the development of volunteer activities; and (c) promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the concept of a "first call for children".

32. In the past year, NGOs have made a vital contribution in promoting the Convention and a "first call for children". In Albania, concerns arising from abuses in intercountry adoption led the Government to request UNICEF assistance. A joint UNICEF/NGO mission was undertaken in August 1992, comprising Defence for Children International, International Social Service and Caritas International. The partners had gained experience in this area in Romania in 1991 and the mission was able to propose draft legislation, subsequently passed by the Albanian Parliament, covering national and intercountry positions on adoption and abandonment of children in the context of the provisions of the Convention. The mission also identified a number of child protection issues needing attention which have been incorporated into the proposed Albanian country programme of cooperation. The same NGO partners, joined by the International Child Catholic Bureau, worked with UNICEF to prepare a regional seminar, "Implementation of the Rights of the Child: Seeking Family-Based Alternatives for Children who are Abandoned or at Risk", held in Sofia in September 1992 by the Bulgarian National Committee and attended by delegates from 16 countries in the region.

33. UNICEF and NGO partners have prepared and organized various workshops and seminars in the region, including the International Conference on Rehabilitation of Children with Special Needs, held in the Russian Federation in October 1992, under the auspices of the Geneva-based NGO/UNICEF Coordinating Committee on Activities for Children in Eastern and Central Europe. The Committee was established in 1991 to encourage bilateral cooperation between NGOs through the transfer of information and technical assistance. An example of Committee activities includes the support provided for a series of training seminars entitled "Leadership and Organizational Development for NGOs in the Baltic States", organized by the International Federation of University Women in Tartu, Estonia, in October 1992. Further Federation seminars are planned for the region in 1993. A joint workshop in March 1993 with the Inter-Parliamentary

Union will review social policy options and questions relating to the financing of safety nets during the transition to market economies and to the responsibility of parliamentarians for budget or social legislation in some dozen countries.

34. NGOs have also played a leading role in mobilizing government action and public support in favour of breast-feeding. In the former Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, assessment missions have taken place, training has been organized and steps have been taken to establish national breast-feeding committees. The first "baby-friendly" hospital in Central and Eastern Europe was officially designated in Hungary in October 1992.

35. In Albania and Romania, countries where UNICEF emergency activities are already under way, local and international NGOs play a major role. In Romania, in November 1992, more than 1,000 representatives from eight government departments and almost 200 NGOs participated in a five-day forum organized by UNICEF, the United States Agency for International Development and the European Community to compare and evaluate approaches, policies and practices in promoting the welfare of Romanian children. UNICEF support to education and information activities regarding the human immunodeficiency virus and the acquired immune deficiency syndrome in Romania is provided through an international NGO.

36. A number of problems in the region reflect serious violations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Throughout the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, children of ethnic minorities are particularly at risk of suffering negative consequences of the transition. Gypsy children are a particularly vulnerable group, with poor health status, low education levels, inadequate housing, high unemployment and prejudicial treatment from the majority of the population. Gypsy children are disproportionately represented in institutions, among "street children" and in situations of conflict with the law. A preliminary technical meeting to review studies regarding the situation of gypsies in Europe was held at the International Child Development Centre (ICDC) in Florence in October 1992. In Romania, UNICEF is supporting a national study of the situation of gypsy children and their families, and the Bulgarian National Committee for UNICEF is involved in education projects and related activities for gypsies. Follow-up measures, in cooperation with ICDC, will initiate interventions to improve the conditions of these children.

37. UNICEF has carried out a number of activities to stimulate the preparation of NPAs in each of the countries of the region. The rapid changes and the plethora of problems confronting Governments in transition has slowed progress. An adapted time-frame and process which link preparation of NPAs to emerging social sector policy development should be considered. Two regional seminars are planned for the first quarter of 1993 in Hungary to assist countries in Central and Eastern Europe and in the new independent States to mobilize support for and prepare NPAs.

38. Progress was made in certain countries with regard to the preparation of national analyses of the situation of children and women. In most cases these analyses are being conducted through a collaborative effort between government departments, ministries and institutions in each country, with UNICEF support. The Bulgarian situation analysis has been published and draft situation analyses

have been prepared for Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. Work is also under way in Hungary. In May 1992, a workshop was held in Hungary to review the findings of a comparative study on urban and social policy in the context of adjustment initiated by the World Bank and supported by UNICEF. The programme missions to Armenia and Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have produced extensive documentation on the situation of women and children in these countries.

39. UNICEF is supporting a project entitled "Public Policy and Social Conditions: The Transition to the Market Economy in Central and Eastern Europe" to assist Governments in establishing mechanisms to provide regular information for updating situation analyses, strengthening the planning process in social sectors and monitoring the goals of the World Summit for Children. ICDC is providing technical assistance. Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic are already included in the monitoring project. A technical workshop is scheduled for February 1993 to review progress and assess the suitability and feasibility of the full monitoring system. A related process is being considered for the new independent States. A regional report on the changing conditions of children and other vulnerable groups will be produced by UNICEF and ICDC biannually (April and November) in Florence.

40. Translation into Russian of the summary of the State of the World's Children and Facts for Life has been completed, and dissemination through cooperating NGOs and government agencies is extending advocacy on behalf of children in the new independent States.

41. UNICEF has produced a special information kit on children in Central and Eastern Europe, "Children and the Challenges of Transition". The kit, which highlights the difficulties faced by countries undergoing the transition to a market-oriented economy, is being used as an advocacy and mobilizing tool with donors and the media. UNICEF joined other United Nations agencies in the United Nations/United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seminar on Promoting Independent/Pluralistic Media, held in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan, in October 1992.

B. Country programme preparations

42. In accordance with the mandate given by the Executive Board at its 1992 session, UNICEF carried out assessment missions on the situation and development of country programme recommendations in the qualifying countries of Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan between October and December 1992. The programming mission to Tajikistan was postponed due to civil strife in the country. The missions, comprising specialists in such areas as health, nutrition, water supply and sanitation, environment, information and communication, and economics, worked closely with government authorities and in consultation with other donors. Country programme recommendations were also prepared for Albania and Romania by UNICEF field offices in those countries.

43. Country programme recommendations for the qualifying countries are being presented to the 1993 Executive Board. One country programme submission will incorporate Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.24). Separate recommendations for programme cooperation will be submitted for Albania (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.21), Armenia (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.22) and Azerbaijan (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.23).

44. An amount of $1 million from general resources and $1 million from supplementary funds is being requested for each qualifying country for 1993 and 1994. A recommendation for the extension of the special programme in Romania for two years (1993-1994) in the form of a stand-alone supplementary funding proposal is also being presented to the Board (E/ICEF/1993/P/L.29).

C. Emergency responses

45. UNICEF emergency activities have been undertaken in close collaboration with other United Nations agencies, in accordance with the integrated United Nations system approach of channelling emergency responses through the newly established Department of Humanitarian Affairs. Principal partners have been the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and WHO. UNICEF has also collaborated extensively with such agencies as the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other NGOs active in emergency relief.

46. In the new independent States, there has been increasing evidence of a deterioration in health, standard of living and food consumption of vulnerable groups. Although assistance has been provided by the international community, large gaps remain. The continued need for urgent assistance, particularly during the winter months of 1992, was strongly highlighted at the Tokyo Coordinating Conference on Humanitarian Assistance to the new independent States in October 1992. UNICEF launched a special request for $25 million to meet the urgent medical and health needs of children during the winter months, but donor response has been slow. Critically needed pharmaceutical supplies were provided to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan using advances from the Emergency Programme Fund. A special effort was conducted in Kazakhstan in early 1993 to ensure that children do not die of acute respiratory infections during the difficult winter, through an emergency supply of basic antibiotics, training of health workers and education of the public.

47. At the request of UNHCR, an inter-agency mission comprising representatives of United Nations operational agencies, including UNICEF, the donor community, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and NGOs undertook an assessment mission to the former Yugoslavia in August 1992. Subsequently, an inter-agency appeal for humanitarian assistance was launched in September 1992. The consolidated appeal of $434,165,800 covered the priority needs for food, shelter and medical services over the next eight months. The total UNICEF contribution was $42.5 million, providing emergency supplies, equipment and technical assistance prior to the onset of winter.

48. A second specialized joint UNHCR/UNICEF mission to the former Yugoslavia was undertaken in late August to assess the effect of conflict on children. The mission report, which focused on psycho-social traumas, formulated policy guidelines for the evacuation of children and vulnerable population groups.

49. During a visit to the former Yugoslavia in September 1992, the Executive Director of UNICEF secured agreement among leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia for a "Week of Tranquillity for Children". During that week (1-7 November), UNICEF was able to reach 450,000 children in four of the six republics with blankets, clothes, food and medicine.

50. UNICEF assistance to more than 3 million refugees and internally displaced and severely affected persons in the former Yugoslavia is being provided from four locations. Interventions include the provision of basic food and medicines; restoration of health care services; water supply, sanitation systems and educational services, primary education; mine awareness campaigns; and a psycho-social rehabilitation project for children traumatized by war. The UNICEF programme is being implemented with funds received from the special appeal ($13.7 million by end-December 1992), in close cooperation with UNHCR and other United Nations agencies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and local Red Cross, local and international NGOs, the European Community and the United Nations Protection Forces.

51. As a result of the deteriorating political and military situation in Tajikistan, an inter-agency mission under the leadership of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs was deployed in November. The mission estimated that 20,000 persons had died and 400,000 persons were displaced. Widespread shortages of drugs and medical supplies, fuel and food were reported. UNICEF provided emergency assistance in the amount of $570,000 to cover priority drugs, vaccines, supplementary food and blankets. A consolidated United Nations appeal for emergency assistance to Armenia and Azerbaijan was launched in December 1992 by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in collaboration with UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP. An inter-agency mission to Georgia is scheduled for early 1993.

52. During 1992, UNICEF continued to participate in the Task Force on Chernobyl. Supplementing its earlier contributions, the German National Committee for UNICEF contributed an additional $440,000. A cooperative programme with UNESCO to establish community rehabilitation and counselling centres has been initiated in areas affected by the disaster.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

53. Just over two years have elapsed since UNICEF returned to work in Central and Eastern Europe, the region where its activities on behalf of children began in the aftermath of the Second World War. In accordance with the priority it continues to give to the needs of children in developing countries, UNICEF has deployed only limited human and material resources. However, all countries of the region have now received one or more UNICEF missions and some form of UNICEF assistance. UNICEF responses thus far included the short-term provision of emergency assistance, advocacy for planning for children and a number of workshops relating to health and safety nets issues.

54. UNICEF resources have encouraged a number of countries to make more appropriate use of their own considerable potential and facilitated their access to diverse resources available from other donors. For example, carefully targeted UNICEF support in Romania has allowed the Government to benefit from the expertise of other United Nations agencies, such as WHO and UNESCO, and from the financial resources of the World Bank and other major donors. The inter-agency missions to the new independent States in early 1992 stimulated other donors to provide substantial emergency assistance to the region without involving a commitment of UNICEF funds. In Central and Eastern Europe, and increasingly in the new independent States and in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, partnerships between UNICEF and a number of international NGOs have made available to these countries their expertise in important areas relating to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

55. Because of the rapid evolution of events in the region, UNICEF assistance could not be based on an extensive period of planning or long-standing knowledge of local conditions. Of necessity, the provision of assistance has moved rapidly from plan to action, relying for its effectiveness on timely and accurate identification of needs and priorities. Nevertheless, in a short space of time, a combination of flexibility in programming assistance, prompt responses to emerging needs and the priority given to collaborative approaches have created, in the region, a solid reputation for UNICEF in the region as an effective ally for children, both with Governments and with other partners.

56. Working together with United Nations agencies and other allies, UNICEF can play an important role in helping to prepare countries to confront change and to protect their children against the negative consequences of the transition to market-oriented economies. Centralized systems of power and authority are disintegrating and many health and social systems are increasingly affected by resource constraints. Responsibility for family welfare needs to be returned to parents and providers of services in the community. Existing services need to be strengthened by the transmission of new knowledge and skills. UNICEF can draw on its experience in other countries in these fields, assisting countries to empower their populations and enhance the quality of the services they provide.

57. Throughout the region, a whole range of social policy and legislation is under review, often accompanied by fundamental restructuring of existing services for children resulting from the deteriorating social and economic climate. While responding to needs in crisis situations, UNICEF has at the same time promoted analysis and debate about the nature and scale of those needs, as well as policy requirements for longer-term solutions. UNICEF is also expanding its own understanding of areas such as the protection of children at risk through family strengthening and support.

58. Where a UNICEF presence has been established, the organization has been able to make particularly good use of the opportunities offered by the extraordinary and changing circumstances in the region. Even with a very limited presence, as in Romania, UNICEF has been able to play an important role for children by maximizing the potential of partnerships for children in situations where donors and Governments lack knowledge of each other and where the reputation and authority of UNICEF can build essential bridges.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND BUDGET

59. During the past year, two additional International Professional posts and two General Service posts have been established with funding from the administrative and programme support budget, as approved by Executive Board decision 1992/19 (E/ICEF/1992/14). The posts, in New York and Geneva, will greatly enhance UNICEF capacity to support activities for children and women in Central and Eastern Europe and the new independent States.

60. The general responsibilities for this newly strengthened section include collecting data, undertaking analytical studies and supporting technical workshops and publication of materials regarding the impact or hildren and women of the changing situation in the region; providing technical support as appropriate for the development of child-focused policies in the region; and responding on an exceptional basis to requests for limited emergency assistance within normal UNICEF programmes. In addition, subject to the approval of the country programme recommendations by the Executive Board, the section will also provide support for programme activities in qualifying countries to:

(a) Provide policy guidance;

(b) Support and monitor programme preparation, implementation and review;

(c) Mobilize and coordinate headquarters and other support services as appropriate;

(d) Work with the Programme Funding Office to secure supplementary funds;

(e) Cooperate with the Emergency Section on emergencies in the region.

61. The chief of the section is based in New York, while the section works as a single unit functioning from both New York and Geneva. Policy issues and some operational aspects are normally dealt with in New York. The New York staff also provide back-up support for activities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, while the Geneva staff deal with day-to-day matters relating to Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Romania and the former Yugoslavia. Responsibility for issues involving non-qualifying countries is decided on a case-by-case basis.

62. During the past year, a special representative for Albania was appointed. A special representative was also appointed for the former Yugoslavia, based initially in Geneva, but subsequently in the former Yugoslavia. The Executive Director intends to establish an area office to cover the five republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The representatives are primarily responsible for continuing emergency activities initiated in those countries, developing programme recommendations and, subject to Board approval, the subsequent implementation of these programmes. The UNICEF special representative in Romania will continue to carry out UNICEF activities in that country. During the past year, a number of staff have been redeployed from UNICEF offices in New York, Geneva and other places for the programming missions described in paragraph 42 above.

63. UNICEF emergency support to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States, including the former Yugoslavia, totalled $13.7 million for 1991-1992 (see table 1). Emergency expenditures in the region in 1992 were significantly less than 2 per cent of the total global expenditure on emergencies (see table 2). Over the period 1990-1992, expenditures totalled just over $4 million for analytical work, advocacy and support staff (see table 3).

Table 1. Emergency support to Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States, 1991-1992

(In United States dollars)

Country	Allotment	Expenditure	Balance
Albania	872 441	474 656	397 785
Bulgaria	50 000	49 453	547
Romania	4 902 323	3 785 188	1 117 135
Former Yugoslavia	22 717 399	8 272 664	14 444 734
Armenia	72 907	72 907	-
Azerbaijan	85 561	85 561	-
Belarus	24 413	24 413	-
Estonia	36 317	36 317	-
Kazakhstan	444 945	57 945	387 000
Kyrgyzstan	272 528	30 528	242 000
Latvia	45 797	45 797	-
Lithuania	66 830	66 830	-
Moldova	20 405	20 405	-
Russian Federation	349 240	201 028	148 212
Tajikistan	606 855	36 855	570 000
Turkmenistan	98 419	28 419	70 000
Ukraine	55 203	55 203	-
Uzbekistan	389 580	76 703	312 877
Former Soviet Union	373 148	295 182	77 966
TOTAL	31 484 311	13 716 054	17 768 256

Table 2. Emergency expenditures in Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States in relation to total global programme expenditures, 1992

(In millions of United States dollars)

Region	Amount	Percentage
Asia	171.7	29.9
Africa	208.5	36.2
Americas and the Caribbean	48.2	8.4
Middle East and North Africa	66.8	11.6
Interregional	71.9	12.5
Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and the new independent States	8.2	1.4
Total	575.3	100.0

Table 3. Administrative and programme support budget

(In United States dollars)

Executive Board decision 1990/5 (E/ICEF/1990/13) covering 1990-1992	3 000 000
Executive Board decision 1992/19 (E/ICEF/1992/14) covering 1992-1994	6 080 000
Total allotment	9 080 000
Less: Actual expenditures as of 31 December 1992 Obligations as of 31 December 1992	 4 098 601 219 621
Unspent balance as of 1 January 1993	4 761 778